

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (withdrawn): A skeleton structure member made by disposing a solidified granular bulk material obtained by bonding together and thereby solidifying multiple granules inside a skeleton member of a transport machine and/or a space bounded by the skeleton member and a panel member peripheral thereto,

wherein, in the solidified granular bulk material, the granules are bonded together by surface fusion and an internal pressure is created by expansion.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing a skeleton structure member ~~made by disposing a solidified granular bulk material obtained by bonding together and thereby solidifying multiple granules of a transport machine,~~ the method comprising:

~~placing a bag or a vessel that has been pre-packed with multiple discrete microcapsules that include a core substance consisting of a liquid or a solid wrapped with a thermoplastic resin film inside a skeleton member of a transport machine and/or a space bounded by the skeleton member and a panel member peripheral thereto, said method including the steps of placing granules, which are made by wrapping a core substance consisting of a liquid or a solid with a film and pre-packed into a bag or a vessel, into the skeleton member and/or space in an un-~~

expanded state; and,

heating the granules microcapsules to gasify the core substance and soften the thermoplastic film and thereby causing cause the granules microcapsules to expand and thus form hollow granules that, upon cooling, solidify within the skeleton member and/or the space bounded by the skeleton member and the panel member peripheral thereto and bond together as a solidified granular bulk material.

Claim 3 (canceled).

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein upon cooling the granules that are bonded together each have an external diameter within the range of from about 10 μ m to about 200 μ m.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the heating step is conducted at a temperature within the range of from about 130°C to about 200°C.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method according to claim 5 wherein the heating step is conducted on a paint drying line provided in a production line for drying paint on the transport machine.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front side frame of a vehicle body.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a side sill of a passenger compartment of a vehicle body.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front floor cross member of a vehicle body.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a center pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a rear pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a door beam of a vehicle body.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The method according to claim-12 wherein the skeleton structure member is a roof side rail of a vehicle body.